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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE 2004 GENERAL ELECTIONS: END-SEPTEMBER UPDATE

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(C) MAPUTO 1183
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(E) MAPUTO 1001

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Summary

2. (SBU) On December 1 and 2, Mozambique will hold multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections. The current president, Joaquim Chissano, will step down after having served since 1986, winning elections in 1994 and 1999. To date, six presidential candidates have delivered their nomination papers to the Constitutional Commission, thus officially declaring their intent to run. Political parties have also been busy compiling their candidate lists for the parliamentary elections with some surprises in the lists reported so far. Mozambican electoral authorities estimate just over 9 million Mozambicans are registered to vote. A new electoral law introduced this year has introduced some significant changes that most believe will increase transparency in the electoral process. Though leading presidential candidates Armando Guebuza of FRELIMO and Afonso Dhlakama of RENAMO have called for a transparent and peaceful process, there are signs of increasing tensions. End Summary.

The New Electoral Law

3. (U) The new electoral law passed on July 17 introduced significant changes that respond to some problems experienced in previous elections. For example, in an attempt to reduce errors made by tired polling station staff, vote tallies on the formal result sheets must now be written in both figures and words. Also, voting can no longer be extended for a third day. In response to the omission of some party symbols from ballot papers in last year's municipal election, political parties will now be invited by the National Electoral Commission (CNE) to proofread sample ballot papers before official ones are printed. The new law also allows accredited polling staff, security forces, and journalists to vote at any polling station, even if they are not registered at the specific site. While intermediary counting will still be done at provincial level, under the new law results will also be published district-by-district.

4. (SBU) Responding to complaints from the opposition and observers about FRELIMO's use of government vehicles and facilities during campaigning, the law introduces a ban on the use of any goods or property of central government, local government, or state-owned or controlled companies for campaigning purposes. Despite this new statute, RENAMO continues to report the use of public property for campaigning purposes by FRELIMO (Ref B). In an attempt to increase transparency, candidates and political agents are now entitled to a duly signed and stamped copy of the minutes and tally sheet of the intermediary count at the provincial and national counting levels. Such copies can also be forwarded to election observers and journalist, if requested. RENAMO party officials have praised for this new statute, asserting it will stifle FRELIMO's ability to "steal" the elections, as it claims they have in past elections (Ref A).

5. (U) Some changes introduced for the 2003 local elections remain in place, including the ban on publishing of opinion polls between the start of the campaign and the declaration of results, the requirement that at least two of the five polling station staff speak the local language, and that polling station staff are to be hired in a public competition.

Election Statistics

16. (U) Voter registration in Mozambique, as regulated by Law 18/2002, is conducted on an annual basis. Voter registration updates serve to register newly eligible voters, record transfers for citizens who have moved out of their previous voting district, and replace lost or stolen voter cards. More than 1.2 million voters across 2494 polling stations were registered in this year's update process held from June 28 to July 15, nearly double the 700,000 predicted by Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE). The following is the official breakdown of voter registration updates released by STAE on September 11.

Table I: 2004 VOTER REGISTRATION FIGURES

Province	New Transfers	Replacements	Total
Niassa	34,571	9,091	18,798 62,460
Cabo Delgado	57,028	19,251	25,296 101,575
Nampula	134,665	33,908	69,058 237,631
Zambezia	128,863	31,577	71,504 231,944
Tete	61,832	11,860	14,096 87,788
Manica	43,280	13,291	17,065 73,636
Sofala	62,248	21,956	34,165 118,369
Inhambane	33,063	18,741	12,810 64,614
Gaza	44,834	23,141	23,020 90,995
Maputo Province	42,281	18,025	18,413 78,719
Maputo City	55,260	16,502	26,478 98,240
GRAND TOTAL	697,925	217,343	330,703 1,245,971

17. (U) Adding the number of 2004 updated registrations to the existing voter base from 1999 and 2003, STAE calculates the total Mozambican voter "universe" at approximately 9 million. Carter Center estimates are slightly more conservative at 8.5 million.

18. (SBU) This year's registration process was observed by both the national Electoral Observatory and the Carter Center. Though in its registration update report, the Carter Center stated it found procedures were fair and generally implemented in a uniform manner, there were reports of some stations being forced to halt registrations, sometimes for several days, when materials ran out. In a formal complaint, RENAMO stated that 100 people had been turned away by a polling station in Angoche, Nampula province, due to a shortage of registration materials. During a September 24 meeting with Emboffs, the Carter Center also cited some reports of intimidation in Tete province.

19. (U) Registration of Mozambicans living abroad took place for the first time between September 4 and 25 at Mozambican embassies and consulates in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Swaziland, Malawi, Tanzania and Kenya in Africa and Portugal and Germany in Europe. Whether or not those registered will be able to vote , however, is now in question due to the unexpectedly low registration numbers. Fewer than 22,000 Mozambicans registered during the 3-week period ending on September 25, well under STAE's estimate of 300,000 Mozambicans of voting age residing in the nine countries where registration took place. In the event CNE decides not to hold elections in the two external constituencies (Africa and Europe), as is expected due to the low registration numbers, two parliamentary seats that had been reserved for them will be redistributed to Manica Province and Maputo City.

----- Parliamentary Elections -----

10. (U) On September 4, CNE announced the breakdown of the 250 parliamentary seats at stake in the December general elections. Assuming no elections are held abroad (ref paragraph 9), the breakdown is as follows:

Table II: 2004 DISTRIBUTION OF PARLIAMENTARY SEATS

Province	Number of Parliamentary Seats
Niassa	12
Cabo Delgado	22
Nampula	50
Zambezia	48
Tete	18
Manica	15
Sofala	22
Inhambane	16
Gaza	17
Maputo Province	13
Maputo City	17
GRAND TOTAL	250

11. (SBU) Deputies to the Mozambican parliament are elected through a system of delegate lists compiled by party members at the provincial level and approved by the central party political commissions. There have been some surprises in this year's preliminary provincial lists. Ossufo Quitine, current chairman of the RENAMO parliamentary bench, failed to be elected in his constituency of Nampula, as did senior party member and current parliamentarian David Aloni. Quitine, speaking to the Mozambican press, brushed aside this apparent lack of popularity, characterizing the Renamo elections in Nampula as "a joke in bad

taste." Sergio Vieira and Mariano Matsinhe, both leading Frelimo parliamentarians and former security ministers under Machel, also failed to be elected during FRELIMO's provincial electoral conferences. Other FRELIMO heavyweights who did not make the party list are current Minister of Foreign Affairs Leonardo Simao and current Minister of Industry and Energy Castigo Langa (Note: Under the Mozambican parliamentary system, individuals who hold public titles may not serve in the parliament at the same time that he/she holds public office. Nevertheless, an individual may chose to run for parliament and, if elected, the party will select which position he/she will hold. Some believe that the attempt by Simao and Langa to gain a spot on the list of FRELIMO deputies points to an imminent departure from their respective ministries. End note.)

12. (SBU) There is speculation among some that the final delegation lists may change before the election date. Although widely reported in the press, the names of party candidates for the 11 provincial constituencies are not final until the parties' Political Commissions have approved and presented them to CNE. To date, neither FRELIMO nor RENAMO have submitted their delegate lists, leaving open the possibility for last minute changes.

13. (SBU) RENAMO will again run as the RENAMO-Electoral Union with its coalition of 10 small parties. In a somewhat unexpected change, Carlos Reis' National Union of Mozambique (UNAMO) withdrew from the coalition, replaced by the Ecological Party of Mozambique (PEMO). There are some RENAMO members who are opposed to the coalition, arguing that these minor parties simply take advantage of the RENAMO banner to gain seats in parliament. Nevertheless, RENAMO leadership apparently prefers to keep them in the coalition rather than allow a potential dispersal of votes.

Presidential Candidates Deliver Nomination Papers

14. (U) Six presidential candidates for the December general election have delivered their nomination papers to the Constitutional Council, including ruling party FRELIMO candidate Armando Guebuza and opposition party RENAMO presidential hopeful Afonso Dhlakama. Guebuza was first to deliver his nomination papers, presenting more than 50,000 signatures supporting his nomination. Dhlakama delivered his credentials on September 29, supplying over 58,000 supporting signatures. Others to deliver their nominations papers and the requisite minimum of 10,000 supporting signatures are Raul Domingos of the Party for Peace, Democracy and Development (PDD); Joaquim Nhota of the Democratic Liberal Party of Mozambique (PADELIMO); Yaqub Sibindy of the Independent Party of Mozambique (PIMO); and Neves Pinto Serrano of the Liberal Progress Party of Mozambique (PPLM).

15. (SBU) Although formal campaigning does not start until October 17, FRELIMO's Guebuza has been active in the run up to the elections, making trips to all 11 provinces, as well as visits to the Europe, South Africa, and the United States (Ref D). During his recent visit to South Africa, Guebuza met with numerous business entities in what some opine is an attempt to quell investor fears about his likely election. Although RENAMO's Dhlakama and PDD's Raul Domingos have been less active, both have made trips in recent months within the country and abroad, including visits to the United States (Refs C and E).

First, Unreliable Presidential Poll Says Guebuza Ahead

16. (SBU) According to an opinion poll published by the Higher Polytechnic and University Institute (ISPU), one of Mozambique's private universities, FRELIMO holds an overwhelming lead in this year's presidential race. However, the validity of the opinion poll, taken over a 5-day period with a sample of 9,000 voters from Maputo City, the northern province of Nampula, and the central provinces of Sofala and Zambezia, has come under fire due to its lack of balance and questionable methodology. Despite claims that the sample was geographically unbiased, nearly a third of the respondents came from Maputo City. The survey has also raised questions about the effectiveness of opinion polls in Mozambique. It is widely acknowledged that there is a tendency for those surveyed to provide what they perceive as "politically correct" responses, thus skewing results towards the party affiliation of the pollster. A September 16 local press report said that the IPSU professor who conducted the poll did so at the request of the FRELIMO party.

Comment

17. (SBU) Tensions have run high in the months leading up to this year's general elections. Both major political parties, RENAMO and FRELIMO, have reported acts of intimidation and political harassment on the part of the other (Refs B and D). In response to these threats, both have taken steps to mobilize old war veterans ("antigos combatentes"), an act that could perpetuate further clashes between the two political opponents and endanger the potential for nonviolent elections. It is not yet clear how smoothly the December elections will run, both Guebuza and Dhlakama have stressed the importance of a peaceful and

transparent electoral process, and have committed publicly to
upholding this goal. End comment.
La Lime